

A RESOLUTION to create a special joint committee to study
certain revisions to Tennessee's election laws.

WHEREAS, Tennessee's election statutes, codified at Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 2, have undergone numerous revisions in the past several years, but none of these statutory revisions have adequately prepared Tennessee's county election commissions for the upcoming "Information Superhighway" that will soon be a reality; and

WHEREAS, the use of computers has already revolutionized how elected officials and would-be elected officials contact prospective voters; and

WHEREAS, unfortunately, the pace at which county election commissions are offering voter registration information to the public is extremely slow, and the information that is available is oftentimes confusing; and

WHEREAS, the present inadequacy of voter registration information is truly unnecessary, because that standardization of such information would solve most, if not all, of the existing problems; and

WHEREAS, the Office for Information Resources (OIR) is currently conducting a needs assessment study for the Department of State with a view toward creating an Automated Electoral System (AES) which would result in uniform computerization capabilities of all county election commissions; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has appropriated \$3,000,000 for the AES, subject to the findings of OIR and the approval of the Information Systems Council and the Commissioner of Finance and Administration; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative for this General Assembly to study the necessity of revising Tennessee's current election laws in order to expedite the entry of our voter registration process onto the "Information Superhighway"; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That there is hereby created a special joint committee to study the necessity of revising Tennessee's election laws to ensure greater accessibility to voter registration information via computer technology. This should include, but not be limited to determining how the election laws would need to be revised to implement the AES as recommended by OIR.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special joint committee shall be composed of three (3) members of the House of Representative and three (3) members of the Senate, to be appointed by the respective Speakers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that during the course of its deliberations, the special joint committee shall consider the implementation of the following broad concepts as statutes, in addition to any other matters that the committee deems relevant:

(1) Requiring an applicant's race to be included on the voter registration form;
and

(2) Requiring the release of all residential information contained on the voter registration form, except social security number, and establishing a misdemeanor offense prohibiting anyone from using such information, except for political purposes with violators subject to a \$100 fine for each offense.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That at the request of the chair, all appropriate agencies of state government shall provide staff assistance to the special joint committee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That all legislative members of the special joint committee who are duly elected members of the 99th General Assembly shall remain members of such committee until the committee reports its findings and recommendations to the General

Assembly and shall be paid as members of the General Assembly are paid for attending legislative meetings as provided in Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 3-1-106.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the committee shall be convened by the member with the most years of continuous service in the General Assembly, and at its first meeting shall elect from its membership a chair and vice-chair, and any other officers the committee deems necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the committee shall timely report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the 99th General Assembly by February 1, 1996, at which time the committee shall cease to exist.